

**REMARKS**

Claims 17, 20, 21, 24 and 25 are pending in the application. Claims 17, 20, and 24 are currently amended.

Support for the current amendment to claim 17 can be found in the specification (e.g., on page 5, lines 1-16, on page 9, lines 5-8, and on page 13, lines 25-29, and ) and in the drawings (e.g., Figs. 1a and 1b).

Claim 20 is amended for grammatical correctness.

Support for the current amendment to claim 21 can be found in the specification (e.g., on page 9, lines 5-8)

Claim 24 is amended in view of the amendment to claim 17 and cancellation of claim 21. Support for the amendment can be found in the specification (e.g., on page 9, lines 5-8 and on page 12, lines 18-20).

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

**§ 103 Rejections**

**1. Claims 17, 20, 21, 24 and 25 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Leys et al. (US 2002/0036017) in view of McPeak et al. (USPN 6880808) and Bryant et al. (USPN 5772085).**

Specific grounds for the rejection can be found in the present office action, incorporated herein by reference.

In response, claim 17 is currently amended. Applicants respectfully submit that Leys et al. fail to teach or properly suggest that the valve stem includes first and second sealing elements (i.e., separate elements not contained within a whole) as in currently amended claim 17. McPeak et al. and Bryant et al. as applied by the Patent Office do not overcome this deficiency of Leys et al. Hence, the combination of Leys et al. in view of McPeak et al. and Bryant et al. likewise fails to provide all elements of claim 17, which is hence patentable.

Claim 17 is patentable for at least the above reason. Claims 20, 21, 24, and 25 each one or more additional features to patentable claim 17, and are hence likewise patentable. In summary, the rejection of claims 17, 20, 21, 24 and 25 under 35 USC

§103(a) as being unpatentable over Leys et al. in view of McPeak et al. and Bryant et al. has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance.

Examination and reconsideration of the application as amended is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

August 4, 2011  
Date

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EMD:BBW:jlh\1185672 Amendment to Final OA 6-9-11  
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